



MOULDS ON PLYWOOD

OCCURRENCE

Moulds and algal growth occur on both treated and untreated plywood. Their presence is related to temperature, humidity, wetting and the presence of atmospheric mould spores.

The mould growth can be sooty black, unsightly, and spread rapidly in favourable circumstances, especially warm humid weather. Moulds and algae are a surface effect and do not penetrate the plywood structure. Decay fungi penetrate the wood and actively grow within the wood section.

Moulds can be black or green in colour but algae are associated with surface water as compared to high moisture content timber.

Moulds occur on untreated plywood and on H3.1 LOSP and H3.2 treated plywood. Plywood may develop surface mould in packs if the plywood becomes damp and the conditions in the packet have become ideal. If the spores are around, it may also develop on plywood exposed to weather and in suitable warm, humid conditions where plywood has become wet.

TERMINATION

Below about 18% moisture content, mould development will cease. In the case of mould on

plywood flooring, close in and dry out will eliminate its presence although there will be discolouration. The flowering parts should be brushed off. Similarly dry out eliminates surface algae.

ACTION

Surface mould on treated plywood does not require specific action by the builder. Cutting out of bottom plates at doors and windows early and provision for floors to drain in wet weather is strongly recommended as is early close in. Investigation may be required if building is interrupted and plywood is exposed for exceptional periods. Where concern is raised, specialist investigation for the presence of significant decay fungi may be required. It is not possible to generalise how long an exceptional period is, and local conditions would be important.

REMEDICATION

Although moulds do not affect the performance of the plywood, the application of proprietary products such as '30 Seconds Outdoor Cleaner New Generation' can restore the appearance of the product.

Note: For further information regarding plywood exposed to weather, including face checking, please refer to our *Ecoply and Shadowclad literature available from ecoply.co.nz*